Mr. Edward Bagshaw,

HIS FIRST

SPEECH

IN

PARLIAMENT,

Saturday the seventh of *Novemb.* 1640.

B.1 x 14.1 cm
(1), 5p.

LONDON,
Printed for *Francis Constable,* 1641.

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189310 (1)

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HIS FIRST SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT.

Saturday the 7. of *Novemb.* 1640.

Master Speaker,

I Had rather Act than Speak in these weighty businesses of the Kingdome, which have been excellently handled, by the four worthy Gentlemen that spake last; and therefore I shall be short.

For when I look upon this Body of this goodly and flourishing Kingdome, in matters of Religion, and of our Laws; for like *Hyppocrates* Twins, they live and die together: I say, when I behold

both these, in that State and Plight, as they have been represented unto us, *Flere magis libet quam dicere.*

But this is one comfort, (Master Speaker) that we are here met together for the welfare and happinesse both of Prince & People: And who knows whether this may not be the appointed time, wherein God may restore our Religion as at the first, and our Laws as at the beginning?

The Honour of the King consisteth in the Weale of the people: this undoubted Maxime his Majesty hath made good, by his late gracious Speech and Promise to us, to redresse all our grievances, the enimies of our Peace and Plenty.

To make a people rich, they must have Ease and Justice; Ease in their Conscience, from the bane of Superstition; from the intolerable burden of Innovation in Religion; and from the racks and tortures of strange & new-fangled oaths.

2 They must be eased in their persons, being *Liberi homines*, and not villains, from illegall arrests and imprisonments against *Magna Charta*, being our greatest liberty.

3 They must be eased in their lands, from Forrests, where never any Deer fed; from depopulations, where never any Farm decayed; and from Inclosures, where never any hedges were set.

4 They must lastly be eased in their goods, from the exactions and expilations of Pursuivants and Apparitors, of Projectors and Monopolists, *humanarum calamitatum mercatores*, as an Ancient finely cals them.

And

And if the people have all theſe eſtments, yet if they have not Juſtice, they cannot ſubſiſt. Juſtice is to a civill body, as food to the naturall. If the ſtreams of Juſtice be by unrighteouſneſſe turned into Gall and Wormwood; or by cruelty, like the *Egyptians* waters, be turned into blood; thoſe that drink of thoſe Brooks, muſt needs die and periſh. The Law ſaith, that all Juſtice is in the King, who is ſtiled in our Brooks, *Fons Juſtitiæ*, which he commits to his Judges for the execution; wherein he truſts them with two of the chief flowers which belong to the Crown, the Adminiſtration of his Juſtice, and the Expoſition of his Laws; but he will not truſt them without an Oath required of them by the Statute 18. *Ed.* 3. which is ſo ſtrict and ſevere, that it made a Judge whom I knew, though honeſt and ſtout, yet to quake and tremble at the very mentioning of it. The effect of the Oath is, *That they ſhall do equall Law and right to all the Kings ſubjects, poore as well as rich, without regard to any perſon: that they ſhall not deny to doe common right to every man for the Kings Letters, or for any other cauſe; and in caſe that ſuch Letters doe come, that they proceed to do execution, notwithſtanding ſuch Letters, as they will anſwer it to the King, for their Bodies, Lands, and Goods.*

How this Oath hath been performed, we have ſeen and felt, I need ſay no more.

But when I caſt mine eyes upon the inferiour Courts of Juſtice, where no ſuch Oath is required, I mean the High Commiſſion, and other Eccleſiaſticall Courts, my ſoule hath bled for the wrongs and

pressures which I have observed to have been done and committed in those Courts, against the Kings good people, especially by the monstrous abuse of the Oath *ex Officio*; which as it is now used, I can call no other than *Carnificina Conscientiæ*; which I have some reason to know, having been an Attendant to that Court for these five years, for my selfe, and a dear friend of mine, sometimes a Knight of our Shire, for a very triviall businesse; in that the most that was proved against him, was the putting on his Hat in time of a Sermon; of which Court I shall say more, and make good what I say, when those Vlcers come to be opened.

Master Speaker, I, and those foure Worthies that spake before me, have told you of our miseries, but I cannot tell you of the the remedies; for things are come now to that heigth, that I may say as *Livie* speaks of the *Roman* State in his time, *Nec vitia nostra ferre possumus, nec remedia*; for no Laws will now do us good. Better Laws could not have been made, than the Statute of Monopolies against Projectors: and the Petition of Right against Infringers of Libertie; and yet as if the Law had been the Authour of sinne, there have been, within these few years, more Monopolies and Infringements of liberty, than have been in any age since the Conqueſt; and if these vile Varlets, as Queen *Elizab.* calleth them, that have been the Authours of these evils, and the troublers of our *Israel*, do go unpunished, it will never be better with us; for now during the Parliament, like frozen Snakes, their poyson drieth up; but let the

Parliament

Parliament dissolve, and then their poyson melts and scatters abroad, and doth more hurt than ever before. What then must be done? Why, what the Plaister cannot doe, must be now done with the Lance; *Ense recidendum ne pars sincera trahatur*; I not better English it than in the words of a King; *Let them be cut off in their own wickednesse, that have framed mischiefe by a Law.* My Conclusion, Master Speaker, is this, That all wilfull violations of the Statutes of Monopolies, and Petition of Right, be made Fellony, or *Præmunire* at least; but yet in the mean time let them be made examples of punishments, that have been the Authours of all these evils, according to that Counsell of *Salomon*, to which I will not adde a word more;

Take away the wicked from before the King,
and his Throne shall be established
in righteousnesse.

FINIS.

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